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9 Latin American Accelerator Programs You Should Know

Y Combinator, TechStars and 500 Startups have been attracting applications from all over the world. But the US isn't the only place for start-ups to get a boost: Latin America too is experiencing a boom of accelerators and incubators. Here are nine programs you need to know and their deadlines:

21212.com

Where: Brazil (Rio de Janeiro), USA (NYC)

21 is Rio's area code, 212 is New York's. What a better name than *21212.com* for this new accelerator aimed at building bridges between the two cities? It will focus on digital projects, using the expertise of its founders, which include *Benjamin White* from *Sling Media* and *Marcelo Sales*, founder of *Movile* (mentioned in our post 10 Latin American Startups You Should Watch For).

Besides a seed investment of R$20,000 ($12,700), the four-month program will also provide the selected startups with intensive mentoring. Three Brazilian entrepreneurs are already confirmed as mentors: *Fabio Seixas* (*Camiseteria*), *Anderson Thees* (*Apontador*) and *Paulo Novis* (*Infoglobo*). International names will be announced soon.

Application deadline: July 31th 2011

Startup Rio

Where: Brazil (Rio de Janeiro)

Startup Rio is a four-month acceleration program launched by the Brazil-based angel investor network *Tropical Angels*. Besides IT/Digital startup projects, it will also bet on Life Sciences, Greentech and Social Innovation. Although the program takes place in Rio, international applications are welcome and foreign team members are granted a travel stipend. *Mentors* include names such as Julio Vasconcellos from *Peixe Urbano* and ex-Googler *Amit Garg*.

First acceleration cycle: starting on August 1st 2011

Start-Up Chile

Where: Chile (Santiago)

The model of *Start-Up Chile* is unique: it's a government-supported program to attract startups to Chile and develop the local ecosystem. The program already welcomed *112 startups* such as *Junar* and *Vendder*. A new acceleration cycle began this week and Start-Up Chile also recently *announced* its next call for applications. 100 international projects will be selected in this new round, which unlike previous editions is also open to Chilean companies. Each selected startup receives a $40,000 grant and temporary visas for their team members to move to Chile, where they are offered a desk at Start-Up Chile offices. The program lasts 24 weeks and Start-Up Chile doesn't ask for equity in return.

Application deadline: August 11th 2011.

Startup Farm

Where: Brazil (starting with São Paulo)

Startup Farm's concept is slightly different from a standard accelerator: it's a one-month mentoring program that culminates with a Demo Day. Participating startups are charged a fee in exchange for mentoring and a co-working space; Startup Farm doesn't take any participation in the companies. Its organizer is *Instituto Inovaçao* and its supporters include Microsoft and *Brazil Innovators*. The mentors will be Brazilian entrepreneurs and investors such as *Felipe Matos* and *Gustavo Guida Reis*, already present at *Startup Weekend Rio*.

Applications open; the program starts on August 20th 2011

BA Accelerator

Where: Argentina (Buenos Aires)

BA Accelerator is Vanesa Kolodziej's latest initiative. Featured in our list Latin American Startups: 10 Women to Watch and in this recent video interview, Vanesa is based in Buenos Aires – hence the name of her fund.

BA Accelerator will stagger its investments in three stages over 300 days: during the first 100 days, each company will receive $15,000 to get from an idea to a Minimum Viable Product. BA will then invest a further $30,000 to transform it into an investment-ready company. This phase will culminate with Demo Days in NYC and Silicon Valley. But it's the third stage that is the most innovative: BA Accelerator plans to dedicate $100,000 to help each startup gain international traction. During this third 100-day period, it will have to be based outside Argentina, at one of BA Accelerator's partners' offices – Vanesa, which is also a mentor for 500 Startups, will be co-investing with foreign funds. The list of mentors and partners will be disclosed soon.

Application deadline: September 1st 2011

Wayra

Where: Colombia, Spain, Mexico, Argentina, Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador, Brazil and Chile

As we recently reported, *Wayra* is a highly ambitious program launched by Telefonica across Latin America and Spain. Organized in nine different countries, it will select and accelerate ten projects in each of them. Applications are open to different kinds of projects as long as they're related to ICT. Besides a seed investment of $30,000-$70,000, the teams will be offered a working space at their local Wayra Space, where they'll receive assistance from mentors belonging to Telefonica's contact network.

Application deadlines vary for each country.
Next deadline: September 4th 2011 for Argentina

Founder Institute

Where: multiple locations around the world; in South America: Colombia and Chile

You may be familiar with *Adeo Ressi*'s *Founder Institute*, which has "already help launch 300 technology companies in over 15 cities worldwide", according to its website. Even so, you might not know that it's now present in Latin America. The first country to welcome it earlier this year was Colombia, thanks to the US entrepreneur and blogger *Alan Colmenares*, who convinced Adeo Ressi to come to Bogota. Its next stop will be *Chile*, where the program will start in September.

The Founder Institute isn't strictly speaking an incubator; it charges application and course fees. Still, it can be a game-changer in a market such as Colombia, where startups have a huge need for mentoring.

Applications for Colombia are currently closed;
Deadline to apply in Chile: September 4th 2011

Aceleradora.net

Where: Brazil (multiple cities)

The Brazilian accelerator *Aceleradora.net* was launched in 2008. Contrary to many accelerators who focus on a single city and offer a physical workplace, Aceleradora.net works with startups that are located across Brazil. According to its founder *Yuri Gitahy*, it would otherwise miss interesting entrepreneurs who aren't based in Rio or Sao Paulo and still have innovative, scalable business models. Aceleradora's program lasts three months and includes conferences, mentoring and networking. *Pligus* is one of the startups that recently went through the accelerating cycle. Aceleradora.net also offers training at several industry events; over *100* companies have received mentoring so far, such as the crowdfunding platform *Catarse*.

Next call for applications: around November 2011

Tayrona Ventures

Where: Colombia

Named after the beautiful Colombian beach and national park of Tayrona, *Tayrona Ventures* is a newly created accelerator aimed at developing the startup ecosystem in Colombia. It will focus on Internet startups targeting the Latin American markets. As we recently reported, it will be a partnership between US entrepreneur *Alan Colmenares*, who brought the Founder Institute to Colombia, and the co-founders of online payment platform *PagosOnline*, which is Colombia's most recent startup success story.

Application deadline: to be announced